

*Baltan Academy*

# MAKE TECHNOLOGY WORK AGAIN

*A thought leadership program on  
alternative tech frameworks.*

*March → May 2026*

✦ BALTAN LABORATORIES



# *MAKE TECHNOLOGY YOURS AGAIN*

*2026 EDITION*

We are excited to announce the second edition of Make Technology Yours Again, a thought leadership program meant for tech professionals, art&tech practitioners and people from any technological background interested in questioning the current extractivist and accelerationist dynamics in the tech sector, based on the idea that technological progress is relentless and should feed on the inconsiderate extraction of resources, human and non-human ones.

In this program, we will explore and implement alternative tech frameworks grounded in diversity, hope, solidarity, and regeneration, rooted in contemporary philosophy, art & tech, and activist tech movements.



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# MAKE TECHNOLOGY YOURS AGAIN

2026 EDITION

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Today's rapid technological developments leave us feeling that technological progress is an inevitable, autonomous force that we cannot stop or even control. We find ourselves passive observers of this complex process, which results in opaque technologies we use daily and don't understand. Our technologies and their algorithms understand us, while we do not understand them. The central aim for this trajectory is to reclaim technology (hence the title) and our personal agency in it.

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# MAKE TECHNOLOGY YOURS AGAIN

2026 EDITION

To do so, we will gather in an online learning community for 3 months, to create a knowledge base for new tech alternatives and potentially activate it in a concrete outcome: we will explore the ecological, economical, societal and political implications of existing technologies through readings, discussions and workshops; furthermore, each participant will have the opportunity (through personal coaching) to develop their own idea in reaction to the alternative framework acquired in the trajectory. This can be translated into a prototype, concept for a new service/product/system, story/narrative, essay, artwork, etc., depending on your skills, interests, and the personal investment you want to put into the trajectory. It's of course possible to follow the program without working toward an outcome.

Fig. 2

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# MAKE TECHNOLOGY YOURS AGAIN

## 2026 EDITION

The program consists of eight 3-hour on-line sessions (on Wednesday, 18:30-21:30 CET) and one introductory session. For each session, materials will be provided (readings, podcasts, videos, etc). The first part of the session focuses on framing the topic and discussing the readings, while the second part includes an activity/workshop. In between the online gatherings, it's possible to schedule personal coaching sessions for us to support your personal project or discuss your challenges in adopting alternative tech frameworks in your work environment or practice (and see how we can help you in this journey).



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# PROGRAM

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SESSION 0

## Introduction session

➔ 18 March - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 1

## What is Innovation?

➔ 25 March - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 2

## Materiality of Technology and its Technopolitics

➔ 1 April - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 3

## Digital Scarcity

➔ 15 April - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 4

## Computing with limits

➔ 29 April - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 5

## The Art of Misuse

➔ 6 May - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 6

## Design for Opacity

➔ 20 May - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 7

## Technical Beings

➔ 3 June - 18:30 - 21:30

SESSION 8

## Alternative Tech Beginnings

➔ 10 June - 18:30 - 21:30

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912



# SESSIONS

## SESSION 0

### Introduction session

→ 18 March - 18:30 - 21:30

Participants will introduce themselves. We collectively set the agreements for the learning community and propose the approach for the coming weeks.

## SESSION 1

### What is Innovation?

→ 25 March - 18:30 - 21:30

This session will unpack the concept of innovation, expanding the current use of the term, which is often a buzzword with no clearly defined meaning. We will explore a glossary of innovation, explain why it differs from related concepts (e.g., discovery, invention), and examine it from the perspectives of different participants. We will be questioning the limits of innovation, not to diminish its transformative power but instead to extend its scope: Is innovation nowadays just a technological one? How could we innovate by examining other knowledge systems (e.g., non-Western-based)? What kind of innovation do we need to really tackle the societal challenges of today and not make them worse?

## SESSION 2

### Materiality of Technology and its Technopolitics

→ 1 April - 18:30 - 21:30

The digital world is built on an imaginary of immateriality: the cloud, wireless technologies, miniaturisation, and futuristic brain-computer interfaces, to name a few, lead us to believe that the material implications of our devices and systems are not particularly relevant. In reality, this is the opposite: while our devices are getting smaller and more performing, the technological infrastructure is growing and consuming more than ever, see for example the amount of new data centres connected to AI development and data storage. How can we make the material side more prominent in the technological imaginary to increase awareness of its environmental impact? Finally, we will explore the geopolitical implications of the material resources involved in technological developments and how they are shaping a new political geography of influence and colonisation.

## SESSION 3

### Digital Scarcity

→ 15 April - 18:30 - 21:30

In this session, we will dive into how to create a mindset of digital scarcity to limit our data consumption and production: if in the physical

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## SESSIONS

### Proximity Sensor

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### Motion Sensor

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world, we are aware of the material consequences of our consumption habits, in the digital world, we still believe in a limitless consumption that seems to affect only our attention and mental capacity.

The increasing capacity of hard drives and storage in general (both physical and in the cloud), combined with the ever-growing computational capacity of our devices and internet speed, has removed all external limitations in handling, processing, sending, and storing large amounts of data. So, where does the limit emerge then? It stems from the availability of energy sources and rare earth elements, which are fundamental to the production of batteries and advanced/consumer electronics.

How can we move from considering scarcity a sacrifice to seeing it as an opportunity for creativity, efficiency in resources and well-being (ours and of the planet)?

#### SESSION 4

##### **Computing with limits**

→ 29 April - 18:30 - 21:30

In connection with the idea of limits explored in the previous session, this gathering will focus on recent and historical developments in the open-source movement, activist technologies, and hacker communities, spanning from the 70s to today. We will explore movements/approaches such as permacomputing, low-tech, collapse informatics, feminist technology, convivial computing, and degrowth.

*Make Technology Yours Again*

#### SESSION 5

##### **The Art of Misuse**

→ 6 May - 18:30 - 21:30

This session will focus on artistic strategies for using technology in ways not foreseen by its producers, to counter the idea of predetermined linear progress and the power dynamics of tech industries. What's the agency that we have as users when tech companies program our choices? How can we be indisiplined and challenge technologies, disrespecting them to use them for our goals?

#### SESSION 6

##### **Design for Opacity**

→ 20 May - 18:30 - 21:30

Complex technologies are often described as black boxes, reflecting the difficulty the average user has in understanding how they work. Through this metaphor, we often overlook the role design plays in making these boxes even less accessible, leaving us feeling left out and without agency to engage, modify, hack, or simply repair these devices. Here, we are not only referring to the physical design of technological objects but also to their user interfaces, which, with their superficial simplicity, often hide or misrepresent their inner workings, further distancing us from directly engaging with the underlying complexity and reducing our inclination to understand how something

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## SESSIONS

works. How can we reposition design as a liberating strategy rather than a means to trap us in an infinite scroll? How can design choices help users better understand hardware and software, or at least make them more transparent, (physically) accessible, and open?

### SESSION 7 Technical Beings → 3 June - 18:30 - 21:30

What happens when we give machines the status of technical beings? A different relationship in which they are treated as equals and not just subject to our will. This session builds on contemporary philosophical discourse on the relationship between humans and non-human stakeholders in our systems, acknowledging that technical non-living beings influence our lives more than living ones. What kind of agency could machines acquire in this scenario? And how could we treat them as allies instead of as tools of oppression in reshaping the unjust power dynamics we believe they currently contribute to? This is possible if we assume that each technology is not neutral; it incorporates, in its development, a specific ideology and a set of values and beliefs, and therefore is not, by default, an oppressive agent.

### SESSION 8 Alternative Tech Beginnings → 10 June - 18:30 - 21:30

We view this final session not as the conclusion of this journey, but as the start of implementing this alternative tech value system in the participants' contexts. Participants who worked on a personal project or have already shared ideas and possible implementations in their contexts will present their outcomes or conclusions. Together, we will discuss how we can transform this learning community into a community of practice: how to organise it beyond the scope of this trajectory, and how Baltan can further support you as changemakers in your environment. Community of practice usually refers to a group that shares an interest or concern, learning together to improve their work through regular interaction, knowledge sharing, and collaboration on common challenges, fostering both personal growth and shared expertise, such as artisans with a craft or tech professionals adopting a new system. It's about collective action and learning through doing, distinct from just a network; it's a real shared practice.

Core Module [A]



## PRACTICAL INFO

### LANGUAGE

English

### LEADING LEARNERS AND FACILITATORS

Lorenzo Gerbi and Marlou van der Crujsen (co-directors, Baltan Laboratories) + external speakers and guests in some of the sessions.

### DATES OF THE SESSIONS (WEDNESDAY)

March 18th, March 25th, April 1st, April 15th, April 29th, May 6th, May 20th, June 3th, June 10th

### TIME

18:30 - 21:30 CET on Zoom (with 15 min break)

### PERSONAL COACHING SESSIONS

organised in dialogue with each participant in the weeks in between the content sessions (up to three 30-min sessions per participant)

### WORKLOAD

+/- 1.5 hours reading materials per session (excluding personal voluntary project)

### FEE

→ Regular fee: 550 euros (excluding 21% VAT).  
→ Company Package (5 participants per company): 2500 euros (ex. 21% VAT) per 5 participants.

We suggest framing this learning trajectory as part of your educational budget if you work at a company where it is available and included in your benefits. Let us know if you need more info to do so.

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**  
available on request

### REGISTRATION

Please submit your registration via [this Online Form](#) ➔ by February 27th. For questions, please contact Lorenzo Gerbi [lorenzo@baltanlaboratories.org](mailto:lorenzo@baltanlaboratories.org)

### REGISTRATION DEADLINES

→ March 8th

### PAYMENT

We will send you an invoice after your registration. You can only participate once you paid the fee.

### RESULTS OF THE SELECTION

On a rolling basis, we will give you an answer as soon as possible after your submission. If you submit just before the deadline, you will receive a reply within a week after the deadline.

### PARTICIPANTS

We have a maximum of 25 participants; the trajectory will start with a minimum of 10.



## ABOUT BALTAN LABORATORIES

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Existing  
WiFi NW

Baltan Laboratories is a cultural interdisciplinary lab based in Eindhoven. It was founded in 2008 to revive the creative, collaborative, and exploratory spirit of the Philips Natlab (physics laboratory) in Eindhoven by a group of local artists who missed a place for such exploration and experimentation in the arts. Since its founding, Baltan has operated as a laboratory for experimentation at the intersection of art, science, design, and technology. In our early years, art, technology and media art were central. From our experience in a technology and media-oriented discussion and critique in art and design, we have, over the years, focused on societal challenges and how art and design can play a (positive) role in these.

Our society's so-called wicked problems are networked and span across disciplines. They can no longer be divided into bite-sized parts, nor can we develop solutions for problems separately. Designers, artists, musicians, and architects – people in the creative professions – are well positioned to work across sectors and on projects that lack a clear endpoint or solution. At Baltan, we would like to push even further and create a space where people from all kinds of social, ethnic, disciplinary, and cultural backgrounds can work with each other on an equal, unbound level – we call this indisciplinaryity. As such, we strive to include diverse knowledges (beyond a solely Western perspective) and value systems in Baltan's projects and collaborations: Baltan strives to be radically inclusive, not only among humans but also among non-humans and the living planet. It seeks to approach uncertainty with radical hope, viewing instability as a possibility for reimagining the systems we are part of and rehearsing change.

To address multifaceted questions, Baltan proposes that learning should not be hierarchical but rather a safe space for experimentation and exploration of new territories. Moreover, disciplinary work often creates a distinction between those considered qualified to contribute and those who are not.

Baltan Laboratories has developed a working methodology called indisciplinaryity: an approach that transcends disciplinary boundaries to achieve intellectual emancipation, bypassing specialisations and hierarchies of knowledge. Indisciplinaryity does not mean undisciplined; it opposes what, within disciplines, limits the process of discovery and hinders the free flow of serendipity. This does not mean we should eliminate disciplines; rather, we should design ways to make their boundaries permeable, enabling collaboration to emerge.

In an uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world, the interactions among all living beings are important. The role of technology in shaping these interactions is increasing rapidly. The lab investigates human/non-human and human/technology relationships in the context of our current societal challenges. We do this in a lab setting: we believe in the lab as a space for experimentation, testing, and failure. A playground where uncertainties are welcome, in which curiosity is nurtured, and experimentation is liberated from pre-defined outcomes or disciplinary concerns.

For its programme for the upcoming years, Baltan will give centre stage to rehearsing alternative roles for technology in society. We do this by designing learning paths, projects, and collaborations that bridge different knowledge systems through creative strategies beyond a purely rational approach, including bodily, sensory, intuitive, and performative techniques. We want to incorporate feeling and intuition as ways to grasp complexity.

Baltan fulfils its social role as a cultural institution by providing space to debate, learn, and organise, given the challenges we have to face. In our vision, culture should be a prominent force of change, as we believe change is primarily cultural and behavioural rather than political, infrastructural, or solution-driven.

Core Module [A]

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